

(2) distributors in China are the source of the fentanyl analogs and the precursor chemicals to manufacture fentanyl analogs that are found in Mexico;

Whereas fentanyl produced illicitly in Mexico is—

(1) smuggled across the southwest border of the United States, or delivered through mail and express consignment couriers; and

(2) often mixed with heroin or diluents in the United States and then distributed in the same United States markets in which white powder heroin is distributed; and

Whereas United States law enforcement officials have recently seen—

(1) an influx of illicit fentanyl into the United States directly from China; and

(2) shipments of the equipment to manufacture illicit fentanyl, such as pill presses: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) the use of illicit fentanyl in the United States and the resulting overdose deaths are a public health crisis;

(2) the trafficking of illicit fentanyl into the United States, especially the trafficking of illicit fentanyl by transnational criminal organizations, is a problem that requires close cooperation between the United States Government and the Governments of Mexico and China;

(3) the United States Government and the Governments of Mexico and China have a shared interest in, and responsibility for, stopping the trafficking of fentanyl into the United States and all 3 countries should develop joint actions to attain that goal;

(4) the United States should—

(A) support the Governments of Mexico and China in the efforts of the Governments of Mexico and China to stop the trafficking of illicit fentanyl into the United States;

(B) take further measures to reduce and prevent heroin and fentanyl consumption through the use of evidence-based prevention, treatment, and recovery services; and

(C) provide access to treatment and rehabilitation to help individuals with substance use disorders recover; and

(5) the United States Government, including the Secretary of State, the Attorney General, the Secretary of Homeland Security, and the Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, should use the broad diplomatic and law enforcement resources of the United States, in partnership with the Governments of Mexico and China, to stop the trafficking of illicit fentanyl into the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 536—PROCLAIMING THE WEEK OF OCTOBER 30 THROUGH NOVEMBER 5, 2016, AS “NATIONAL OBESITY CARE WEEK”

Mr. CARPER (for himself and Mrs. CAPITO) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 536

Whereas the disease of obesity is a major source of concern across the United States, and more than one-third of adults in the United States are affected by obesity, with the number of people with severe obesity in the United States continuing to grow;

Whereas experts and researchers agree that obesity is a complex disease influenced by various physiological, environmental, and genetic factors;

Whereas, while prevention programs have successfully established the seriousness of the public health crisis posed by obesity, it is also imperative that individuals and fami-

lies currently affected by obesity receive comprehensive care and treatment;

Whereas studies show that bias against and stigma associated with people affected by obesity among general society and healthcare professionals are significant barriers to effectively treating the disease;

Whereas healthcare professionals, policy-makers, patients, and families should regard obesity with the same level of seriousness with which other chronic diseases are regarded;

Whereas research suggests that weight loss of as little as 5 to 10 percent of the total weight of an individual affected by obesity can improve the associated health risks affecting many patients living with obesity and can thereby support the goals of Federal and State initiatives to reduce chronic disease, improve health outcomes, and help control healthcare costs;

Whereas healthcare professionals should treat patients with respect and compassion and should partner with patients to develop comprehensive and individualized approaches to weight loss and weight management that consider all appropriate treatment options, such as reduced-calorie diets, physical activity modifications, pharmacotherapy, and bariatric surgery; and

Whereas it will take a long-term collaborative effort, which will involve individual, corporate, and institutional partners in all fields taking active roles, to ignite the betterment of obesity care and treatment: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) proclaims the week of October 30 through November 5, 2016, as “National Obesity Care Week”; and

(2) encourages all people in the United States to create a foundation of open communication to break barriers of misunderstanding and stigma regarding obesity and to improve the lives of all individuals affected by obesity and their families.

SENATE RESOLUTION 537—EXPRESSING PROFOUND CONCERN ABOUT THE ONGOING POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND HUMANITARIAN CRISIS IN VENEZUELA, URGING THE RELEASE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS, AND CALLING FOR RESPECT OF CONSTITUTIONAL AND DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES

Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. NELSON, Mr. KAINE, Mr. KIRK, Mr. GARDNER, Mrs. BOXER, and Mr. BLUNT) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 537

Whereas the deterioration of basic governance and the economic crisis in Venezuela have reached deeply troubling levels, which in turn have led to an unprecedented humanitarian situation in Venezuela where millions of people are suffering from severe shortages of essential medicines and basic food products;

Whereas Venezuela lacks more than 80 percent of the basic medical supplies and equipment needed to treat its population, including medicine to treat chronic illnesses and cancer as well as basic antibiotics, and 85 percent of pharmacies are at risk of bankruptcy, according to the Venezuelan Pharmaceutical Federation;

Whereas, despite the massive shortages of basic foodstuffs and essential medicines, President of Venezuela Nicolas Maduro has

rejected repeated requests from the majority of members of the National Assembly and civil society organizations to bring humanitarian aid into the country;

Whereas the International Monetary Fund assesses that, in Venezuela, inflation reached 275 percent and gross domestic product contracted 5.7 percent in 2015, and further projects that inflation will reach 720 percent and the gross domestic product will contract an additional 8 percent in 2016;

Whereas Venezuela's political, economic, and humanitarian crisis is fueling social tensions that are resulting in growing incidents of public unrest, looting, and violence among citizens;

Whereas these social distortions are taking place amidst an alarming climate of violence as Caracas continues to have the highest per capita homicide rate in the world at 120 per 100,000 citizens, according to the United Nations Office on Drug and Crime;

Whereas the deterioration of governance in Venezuela has been exacerbated by widespread public corruption and the involvement of public officials in illicit narcotics trafficking and related money laundering, which has led to indictments by the United States Department of Justice and ongoing investigations by the United States Department of Treasury and the United States Drug Enforcement Administration;

Whereas domestic and international human rights groups recognize more than 85 political prisoners in Venezuela, including opposition leader and former Chacao mayor Leopoldo Lopez, Judge Maria Lourdes Afiuni, Caracas Mayor Antonio Ledezma, former Zulia governor Manuel Rosales, and former San Cristobal mayor Daniel Ceballos;

Whereas, in December 2015, the people of Venezuela elected the opposition coalition (Mesa de Unidad Democrática) to a two-thirds majority in the unicameral National Assembly, with 112 out of the 167 seats compared with 55 seats for the government's Partido Socialista Unido de Venezuela party;

Whereas, in late December 2015, the outgoing National Assembly increased the number of seats in the Supreme Court of Venezuela and confirmed magistrates politically aligned with the Maduro Administration and, thereafter, the expanded Supreme Court has blocked four legislators, including 3 opposition legislators, from taking office;

Whereas, during the first 6 months of the new legislature, the Supreme Court has repeatedly issued politically motivated judgments to overturn legislation passed by the democratically elected National Assembly and block internal legislative procedures;

Whereas, in 2016, President Maduro has utilized emergency and legislative decree powers to bypass the National Assembly, which, alongside the actions of the Supreme Court, have severely undermined the principles of separation of powers in Venezuela;

Whereas, in May 2016, Organization of American States Secretary General Luis Almagro presented a 132-page report outlining grave alterations of the democratic order in Venezuela and invoked Article 20 of the Inter-American Democratic Charter, which calls on the OAS Permanent Council “to undertake a collective assessment of the situation”;

Whereas, in June 2016, at a joint press conference with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau of Canada and President Enrique Peña Nieto of Mexico, President Barack Obama stated, “Given the very serious situation in Venezuela and the worsening plight of the Venezuelan people, together we’re calling on the government and opposition to engage in meaningful dialogue and urge the Venezuelan government to respect the rule of law and the authority of the National Assembly.”; and